

State of Vermont

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Jane Kitchel, Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations

FROM: Emily Hawes, Commissioner

DATE: April 5, 2022

SUBJECT: Staff positions at the new Secure Residential Facility

The Department of Mental Health is requesting sixteen (16) permanent classified positions for the fiscal year 2023. This memo is to provide additional information regarding these new positions.

One of the positions is to manage the suicide prevention activities as outlined in the budget request. The remaining 15 are for the Middlesex Therapeutic Community residence (MTCR).

All MTCR positions currently working in Middlesex will move to the new Secure Residential facility. Due to the increase in beds from 7 to 16, the facility will require additional Nurses, direct care staff, an additional Social Worker, Activities Therapist and Psychologist.

In addition to these direct care staff, in order to retain the ability to draw down federal matching dollars, the new Secure Residential must be completely separate from Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) and function independently without the support and structure of VPCH. Currently, MTCR utilizes assistance from VPCH for:

- Kitchen and food prep staff
- Staffing Office scheduling and position management
- Nurse and Direct Care Staff training and supervision

As you are aware, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) prohibits the use of federal financial participation for adult patients (aged 21-64) who are receiving mental health or substance use treatment in a psychiatric or substance abuse treatment facilities with greater than sixteen (16), known as the Institutions of Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion. This means new support staff are also needed in this move.